

Listing of Claims:

This Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions and Listing of Claims in the present Application.

We claim:

1. (cancelled) A method of installing a landscape planting bed, the method comprising the steps of:

positioning a substantially continuous panel defining a primary water distributing and a air holding structure over a base surface in an area which is to contain landscape plantings; and

positioning landscape plants over the substantially continuous panel, wherein the primary water distribution structure and air holding structure consists of a porous and laterally permeable primary water and air holding distribution material contained within the panel and open to receive water from a water source.

2. (cancelled) The method of claim 1 further compromising the step of:

a) positioning a lower boundary material to reside between the base surface and the primary water and air holding structure material, the lower boundary material comprising a substantially less porous and permeable material having watering charging and air holding characteristics different from the water charging and air holding characteristics of the primary water and air holding structure material.

3. (cancelled) The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of:

a) positioning an upper boundary material to reside over the principle surface of the primary water and air holding structure material, the upper boundary

material comprising a porous and permeable material having watering charging and air holding characteristics different from the water charging and air holding characteristics of the primary water and air holding structure material.

4. (cancelled) The method of claim 3 wherein the steps of positioning the lower boundary material, the primary water distributing and air holding material, and the upper boundary material are performed simultaneously.

5. (cancelled) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

a) positioning the a water supply to direct irrigation water into one of the water distributing and air holding panel materials.

6. (cancelled) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

a) blocking substantially the outer periphery and lower surface of the water distributing and air holding panel materials.

7. (cancelled) A method of installing a landscape planting bed, the method comprising the steps of:

positioning a substantially continuous water-permeable panel defining a primary water holding and air holding structure over a base surface in an area which is to contain landscape plantings; and

positioning landscape plants over the substantially continuous panel , wherein the primary water distribution structure and air holding structure consists of a porous and laterally permeable primary water and air holding distribution material contained within the panel and open to receive water from a water source, and further comprising the step of positioning a water flow blocking material around substantially the entire peripheral

edge and lower surface of the primary water distribution structure and air holding structure.

8. (cancelled) The method of claim 7 further comprising the step of:

a) positioning a water supply conduit to direct irrigation water into the primary water distribution structure and air holding structure at a charging point located at the peripheral edge of the primary water distribution structure and air holding structure.

9. (cancelled) The method of claim 7 further comprising the step of:

a) positioning a water supply conduit to direct irrigation water into the primary water distribution structure and air holding structure through the top surface of the primary water distribution structure and air holding structure.

10. (cancelled) A method of producing a landscape planting ecosystem, the method comprising the steps of:

positioning a substantially continuous water distribution structure and air holding structure panel over a base surface in an area is to contain landscape plantings, positioning a selection of landscape planting materials comprising growing medium and live landscape plantings over the mat; and providing a water inlet to said panel such that water will be distributed evenly in the area of the panel.

11. (cancelled) An irrigation method comprising the steps of:

supplying irrigation water at a charge rate into a primary water distribution structure and air holding structure associated with a continuous water-permeable panel having a lateral areas residing in the root zone of a planting area to be irrigated and

extending throughout the area, the panel forming a discontinuity with the material above the panel and below the panel; and

distributing the irrigation water throughout the lateral area of the panel through the primary porous structure in response to the irrigation water supplied at a charge rate such that the water evenly fills the panel, wherein the step of distributing the irrigation water through the lateral area of the panel includes the step of moving the water through the porous material and trapping air in the interconnected cellular structure of the primary porous structure such as to create available air for landscape plant roots, and wherein the step of supplying the irrigation water to primary water distribution structure and air holding structure comprises directing irrigation water from a supply conduit into the panel primary water distribution structure and air holding structure, and further comprising the step of blocking substantially all of the peripheral edge and lower surface of the panel.

12. (cancelled) An irrigation method comprising the steps of:

supplying irrigation water at a charge rate into a primary water distribution structure and air holding structure associated with a continuous water-permeable panel having a lateral area residing in the root zone of a landscape planting area to be irrigated and extending throughout the area, the panel forming a discontinuity with the material above the panel and the material below the panel; and

distributing the irrigation water throughout the lateral area of the panel through the primary water distribution structure and air holding structure in response to the irrigation water supplied at a charge rate such that the water is supplied evenly to the root zone, wherein the step of distributing the irrigation water through the lateral area of the

panel includes the step of distributing irrigation water into a an area of the primary water distribution structure and air holding structure where the root structure of the landscape plant material has been located so as to provide the irrigation water and air to be available to the plant material.

13. (cancelled) An irrigation method comprising the step of:

supplying irrigation water at a charge rate into a primary water distribution structure and air holding structure associated with a continuous water-permeable panel having a lateral area residing in the root zone of an area to be irrigated and extending throughout the planting bed area, the panel forming a discontinuity with the material above the mat and the material below the mat; and

distributing the irrigation water throughout the lateral area of the panel through a primary water distribution structure integrally located within the mat in response to the irrigation water supplied at the charge rate such that the water is evenly applied to the root zone.

14. (cancelled) The method of claim 13 wherein the step of distributing the irrigation water through the lateral area of the mat includes the step of:

a) distributing irrigation water through a controlled release device embedded within the primary water distribution structure and air holding structure.

15. (cancelled) The method of claim 14 wherein the controlled release device is a flow regulating, pressure compensated emission rate module which emits water at a controlled rate.

16. (cancelled) The method of claim 15 wherein the step of supplying irrigation water to the pressure compensated emission rate module comprises:

a) directing irrigation water from a water supply conduit into the flow regulating, pressure compensated emission rate module.

17. (cancelled) The method of claim 15 including the step of:

a) distributing the irrigation water from the primary water distribution structure and air holding structure through an upper boundary of the panel, the upper boundary material having water distribution structure and air holding structure characteristics different from the primary water distribution structure and air holding structure.

18. (cancelled) An irrigation apparatus adapted to be incorporated into the root zone of a landscape planting area to be irrigated, the apparatus comprising:

a substantially continuous panel which may be positioned substantially parallel to the area to be irrigated;

a charge inlet associated with the panel; and

a primary water distribution structure and air holding structure comprising a porous and laterally permeable material selected from a group consisting of an open cell foam material or reticulated material; and the panel includes a lower boundary material selected from a substantially less porous material selected from a group consisting of closed cell foam material or polymeric plastic material.

19. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the porous and laterally permeable primary water distribution material is selected from the group consisting of an open cell foam material, a reticulated material, and a granular material.

20. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 18 further comprising;

a) a peripheral edge boundary material selected from a substantially less porous material selected from a group consisting of a closed cell foam material or polymeric plastic material.

21. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 18 where the charge inlet is located along the periphery edge of the panel.

22. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the porous and laterally permeable primary water distribution material is an open cell foam material or reticulated material with webbed cellular structure such that when filled with water or completely submerged in water air is trapped by the gaps and spaces in the material.

23. (cancelled) An irrigation apparatus adapted to be incorporated into the root zone of a landscape planting area to be irrigated, the apparatus comprising:

a substantially continuous panel for encompassing a soil area to be irrigated and which may be positioned substantially parallel to the area to be irrigated;

a charge inlet associated with the panel for supplying water which is distributed continuously throughout the area of the panel; and

a primary water distribution structure and air holding structure comprising a porous and laterally permeable material selected from a group consisting of an open cell foam and reticulated material for receiving water through the charge inlet, when the irrigation water is received at an operating flow rate, distributing the irrigation water substantially throughout the lateral area of the panel continuously.

24. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 23 wherein the panel includes;

a) a peripheral and lower boundary material located substantially around the entire periphery and lower area of the panel, the boundary material having water charging characteristics different from the primary water distribution material.

25. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 24 where the boundary material comprises a material which is less permeable than the primary water distribution material.

26. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 23 wherein the panel includes:

a) an upper water and air holding structure of the panel includes recessed areas into which the landscape plant material roots can be located.

27. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 26 wherein the upper panel includes;

a) a recessed areas that are created at the time of installation by the person installing the landscape plants.

28. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 26 wherein the upper panel includes:

a) recessed areas for the installing of the landscape plants.

29. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 23 where the charge inlet is the entire upper surface of the panel.

30. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 23 where the charge inlet is through the bottom surface of the panel.

31. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 23 where the primary porous and laterally permeable primary water distribution material is an open cell foam material or reticulated material with webbed cellular structure such that when filled with water or completely submerged in water air is trapped by the gaps and spaces in the material

32. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 26 where the upper porous and laterally permeable primary water distribution material is selected from the group consisting of an open cell foam material, a reticulated material, and a granular material.

33. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 23 where the primary porous and laterally permeable primary water distribution material is an open cell foam material or reticulated material with webbed cellular structure such that when filled with water or completely submerged in water air is trapped by the gaps and spaces in the material.

34. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 23 wherein the charge inlet is a flow controlled emission device which regulates the amount of irrigation water entering the panel.

35. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 26 where the upper porous and laterally permeable primary water distribution material is an open cell foam material or reticulated material with webbed cellular structure such that when filled with water or completely submerged in water air is trapped by the gaps and spaces in the material.

36. (cancelled) An irrigation apparatus adapted to be incorporated into the root zone of a landscape planting area to be irrigated, the apparatus comprising:

- a substantially continuous panel which may be positioned substantially parallel to the area to be irrigated;

- a charge inlet associated with the panel; and

- a primary water distribution structure and air holding structure comprising a porous and laterally permeable material selected from a group consisting of an open cell foam material or reticulated material; and the panel includes a lower boundary material selected from a substantially less porous material selected from a group consisting of

closed cell foam material or polymeric plastic material and an upper water and air holding structure selected from a group consisting of an open cell foam material or reticulated material.

37. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 36 wherein the upper water and air holding structure of the panel includes recessed areas into which the landscape plant material roots can be located.

38. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 37 where the recessed areas are created at the time of installation by the person installing the landscape plants.

39. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 36 where the charge inlet is the entire upper surface of the panel.

40. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 36 where the charge inlet is through the bottom surface of the panel.

41. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 37 where the upper porous and laterally permeable primary water distribution material is an open cell foam material or reticulated material with webbed cellular structure such that when filled with water or completely submerged in water air is trapped by the gaps and spaces in the material

42. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 36 where the porous and laterally permeable primary water distribution material is selected from the group consisting of an open cell foam material, a reticulated material, and a granular material.

43. (cancelled) The apparatus 42 where the porous and laterally permeable primary water distribution material is an open cell foam material or reticulated material with webbed cellular structure which that when filled with water or completely submerged in water air is trapped by the gaps and spaces in the material.

44. (cancelled) The apparatus of claim 36 wherein the charge inlet is a flow controlled emission device which regulated the amount of irrigation water entering the panel.

45. (previously presented): An irrigation method comprising the steps of:
supplying irrigation water into a panel of porous material extending substantially throughout the root zone of a planting area to be irrigated, the panel forming a discontinuity with the material below the panel;

distributing the irrigation water substantially throughout the panel;

trapping air in spaces throughout said panel's porous material so as to create available air for plant roots in the planting area;

wherein said step of supplying irrigation water to said panel further comprises directing irrigation water from a supply conduit into said panel; and

wherein said step of distributing the irrigation water further comprises moving the water through said spaces throughout said porous material of said panel.

46. (previously presented): The irrigation method as recited in claim 45 wherein said panel of porous material is made of webbed material.

47. (previously presented): The irrigation method as recited in claim 45 wherein said panel of porous material is open cell foam material.

48. (previously presented): The irrigation method recited in claim 45 wherein said panel of porous material is bonded crumb rubber and polyurethane material.

49. (previously presented): The irrigation method as recited in claims 46 further comprising the step of blocking the movement of irrigation water at substantially all of the peripheral sides and lower surface of the panel.

50. (previously presented): The irrigation method as recited in claim 49 wherein the step of supplying irrigation water to said panel is supplied at a charge rate so that the water evenly fills the panel.

51. (previously presented): The irrigation method as recited in claim 50 wherein the step of supplying irrigation water to said panel is controlled through a controlled release device embedded within the panel.

52. (previously presented): The irrigation method recited in claim 51 wherein the controlled release device is a flow regulating pressure compensated emission rate module which emits water at a controlled rate.

53. (previously presented): An irrigation method for irrigating a landscaped bed or flower bed comprising the steps of:

supplying irrigation water into a panel of porous material extending substantially throughout the root zone of a planting area to be irrigated, the panel forming a discontinuity with the material below the panel;

distributing the irrigation water substantially throughout the panel;

trapping air in spaces throughout said panel's porous material so as to create available air for plant roots in the planting area;

wherein said step of supplying irrigation water to said panel further comprises directing irrigation water from a supply conduit into said panel; and

wherein said step of distributing the irrigation water further comprises moving the water through said spaces throughout said porous material of said panel.

54. (previously presented): The irrigation method for irrigating a landscaped bed or flower bed as recited in claim 53 wherein said panel of porous material is made of webbed material.

55. (previously presented): The irrigation method for irrigating a landscaped bed or flower bed as recited in claim 53 wherein said panel of porous material is open cell foam material.

56. (previously presented): The irrigation method for irrigating a landscaped bed or flower bed recited in claim 53 wherein said panel of porous material is bonded crumb rubber and polyurethane material.

57. (previously presented): The irrigation method for irrigating a landscaped bed or flower bed as received in claim 54 further comprising the step of blocking the movement of irrigation water at substantially all of the peripheral sides and lower surface of the panel.

58. (previously presented): The irrigation method for irrigating a landscaped bed or flower bed as recited in claim 57 wherein the step of supplying irrigation water to said panel is supplied at a charge rate so that the water evenly fills the panel.

59. (previously presented): The irrigation method for irrigating a landscaped bed or flower bed as recited in claim 58 wherein the step of supplying irrigation water to said panel is controlled through a controlled release device embedded within the panel.

60. (previously presented): The irrigation method for irrigating a landscaped bed or flower bed recited in claim 59 wherein the controlled release device is a flow

regulating pressure compensated emission rate module which emits water at a controlled rate.

61. (currently amended): An irrigation apparatus for supplying irrigation water to the root zone of a planting area for a landscaped bed or flower bed comprising:

a substantially continuous panel of porous material extending throughout the planting area, said porous material having spaces allowing movement of irrigation water through said panel and trapping of air within said panel;

said spaces being of sufficient size to allow plant roots to grow therethrough[.];

a fluid charge inlet associated with the panel; and

said panel having sufficient depth for plant roots to grow wholly within the panel;

62. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus as described in claim 61 wherein said porous material is webbed material.

63. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus recited in claim 61 wherein said porous material is open-cell foam material.

64. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus recited in claim 61 wherein said porous material is bonded crumb rubber and polyurethane material.

65. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus described in claims 61, 62 or 63 further comprising a plurality of recessed openings extending into said panel from said panel's upper surface for receiving landscape plants or flowers.

66. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus recited in claim 65 wherein said recessed openings are of sufficient size to receive root balls and soil.

67. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus recited in claim 66 wherein said recessed openings are slits.

68. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus recited in claim 65 wherein said panel further comprises two layers of porous material, an upper layer on top of a lower layer wherein said recessed openings are wholly within said upper layer.

69. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus as recited in claim 61 wherein said panel is securable to a similar adjacent panel to enlarge the planting area.

70. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus as recited in claim 69 wherein said charge inlet is associated with both panels.

71. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus as recited in claim 61 wherein said charge inlet is the entire upper surface of the panel.

72. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus as recited in claim 61 wherein said charge inlet is through the bottom surface of the panel.

73. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus as recited in claim 61 wherein said charge inlet is located at the peripheral side of the panel.

74. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus of claim 61 further comprising a barrier at said peripheral sides and bottom surface of said panel said barrier being of a material substantially less porous than said panel material.

75. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus as recited in claim 74 wherein said barrier material is closed-cell foam.

76. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus as recited in claim 74 wherein said barrier material is a polymeric plastic material.

77. (previously presented): The irrigation apparatus as recited in claim 74 wherein said barrier material is impermeable.